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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the Oral Communication Program (OCP) developed at Radford University (Virginia) and discusses key components for a proposal to acquire funding from public or private granting agencies. Analogous to the writing-across-the-curriculum movement, the OCP encourages faculty in all academic areas to incorporate oral communication activities into courses as a means of enhancing the learning process and providing students additional opportunities to practice and improve such skills as public speaking, discussion, and listening. Activities to implement intended outcomes for the OCP are presented in four areas: oral class presentations, speech fright, listening, and group discussion. Descriptions of outcomes, activities, institutional commitment, assessment, facilities, dissemination of program results, and personnel are included. An appendix outlines the OCP by year and area covered; a second appendix lists budget items. (11 references) (JDD)

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The Oral Communication Program: Program Description and Model Proposal for A Communication Across the Curriculum Emphasis

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Paper presented at the November 1990 Speech Communication Association Convention, Chicago

The Oral Communication Program:
Program Description and Model Proposal for
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Abstract

A small but growing number of institutions have implemented programs in oral communication across the curriculum. This may involve considerable commitment of institutional resources. Fortunately, such an approach may prove attractive to potential public or private granting agencies. Radford University, Virginia secured a major grant to initiate the largest, most comprehensive oral communication program in the nation. Based on that program, this paper includes key components for a grant proposal plus description of major activities. Thus it provides a model which other institutions may wish to consult when initiating similar projects.

The Oral Communication Program: Program Description and Model Proposal for A Communication Across the Curriculum Emphasis

A small but growing number of colleges and universities have instituted programs emphasizing oral communication skills across the curriculum.[1] Analogous to the more established writing-across-the-curriculum movement, this approach encourages faculty in all academic areas to incorporate oral communication activities into courses as a means of enhancing the learning process and providing students additional opportunities to practice and improve such skills as public speaking, discussion, and listening. Although not without its risks and drawbacks, communication across the curriculum offers several promising benefits. It may enhance the skills training students receive in speech performance courses, foster deeper appreciation among other disciplines for the communicative process, improve student mastery and retention of course materials, improve student and faculty ratings of course satisfaction, and provide resources for speech faculty and departments supporting the emphasis (Cronin and Glenn, 1990).

For those starting such a program, many issues merit consideration: What are the justifications? Roberts (1983) and Steinfatt (1986) offer some development of rationale and initial descriptions of two different approaches. How should it commence operation? Weiss (1988) offers suggestions for start-up strategies. How (and to what extent) should it be paid for? Funding a

communication across the curriculum program presents a critical challenge; some of the pioneering programs, however, have proven attractive to funding agencies.

In light of these considerations, this paper has two purposes: description of the largest, most comprehensive oral communication across the curriculum program in the country[2]; and a model featuring major elements necessary for building a grant proposal to fund an oral communication program.[3] This should prove of primary value both to those considering such a program and those already involved in initial planning stages. In addition, we trust that Speech Communication faculty whose institutions are not currently considering such a program will find interest in learning more about the nature of this innovative approach to communication skills instruction.

The next section presents a problem statement concerning the need for a different, additional approach to communication skills training in colleges and universities. We then characterize one solution: the oral communication across the curriculum approach. Descriptions of outcomes, activities, institutional commitment, assessment, facilities, dissemination, personnel and budget follow. Although these are based on particulars of one program, they can be easily modified to meet different institutional and/or funding agency needs.

The Need for an Oral Communication Program

Since the time of Aristotle, scholars have stressed the importance of oral and written communication training as essential components of a

liberal education. Students need fundamental skills which will help them adapt to various careers throughout their lives. President Derek Bok of Harvard contends that the most obvious skill needed is the ability to communicate orally and in writing with clarity and style (1985). Recent research supports the importance of training in oral communication. Barker et al (1980) report that the average adult spends 80 percent of his/her waking day communicating and approximately 70 percent of that time is spent speaking or listening. The former U. S. Commissioner of Education cites the Carnegie study College: The Undergraduate Experience in America conclusion that "proficiency in the written and spoken word is the first prerequisite for an effective education" (Boyer, 1986, p. 41).

Increasingly, business and education professionals recognize the centrality and importance of oral communication in everyday activities. Recent surveys of major employers reveal that the quality most sought in job applicants is proficiency in oral and written communication. Technical expertise, grade point average, even recommendations from professors, are not nearly as important as high ratings in speaking and writing ability. The Business Forum, made up of 42 university presidents and 52 corporate chief executives, presented a report critical of business school education. Their major complaint was that "too many business graduates have inadequate writing and speaking skills" (1985, May). Twelve of the most successful graduates of Virginia Polytechnic Institute's College of Engineering were asked what advice they would give incoming freshmen concerning activities and

coursework, beyond science and engineering requirements, to help prepare them for their careers. Ten of these twelve cited the need for training in oral communication (Torgerson, 1983). In a survey of executives of companies in California, 66 percent reported that communication skills played a major role in their advancement; 94 percent reported making extensive use of communication skills in their present position (Berko, Wolvin & Curtis, 1983). In a recent address to the American Business Communication Association, a Ford Motor Company representative asserted that communication "should be at the top of the list of skills developed by every careerist who wants to get anywhere near the top of most any institution in this country" (Berko, Wolvin & Curtis, 1983, p. 3). A recent survey of personnel directors indicated that the most important factors in helping graduating college students obtain employment are oral communication (speaking) and listening ability. The factors ranked most important for successful job performance are interpersonal/ human relations skills and oral communication (speaking) skills (Curtis, Winsor, & Stephens, 1989, p. 11). Not only the business world, but social organizations, church groups, political activities and all parts of our society rely on effective communication.

With this increasing recognition of the importance of communication comes increasing recognition that many students stand to benefit enormously from practice, study and a conscious effort to improve their oral communication skills. Students are called on throughout their college years to give class presentations, work in

groups and hold conferences with instructors. Most people can significantly reduce their level of speech fright through professional guidance both in understanding and dealing with their apprehension and in planning the particulars of a public presentation. Individual success in professional and social endeavors often depends upon the ability to persuade others to one's point of view--yet few people have any formal training in this aspect of oral communication. The ability to work in decision-making groups is a vital part of our democratic society; again, most people have no specific skills training designed to aid in such a setting. In short, Americans today face constant, varied demands for a high level of oral communication competence, yet often lack the necessary preparation to deal successfully with these needs.

The need to incorporate oral communication activities to enhance learning across the curriculum provides the second main rationale for an oral communication program. Several recent papers provide detailed development of this rationale (Roberts, 1983; Steinfatt, 1986; Weiss, 1988).

Many universities have responded to the need for additional communication training by adding more English courses. This approach, while laudable, fails to provide the vital oral communication skills necessary for college graduates:

> While valuable, English courses address writing as the principal, and usually as the only, form of communication to be considered. Lost is the concern with oral communication, with listening, with communication

> apprehension, with interpersonal communication, with intra- and inter-group communication, with persuasion and argumentation, and with the host of other concerns represented in the work of both rhetorical and behavioral scholars in speech communication, and in the concerns about communication competence in the non-academic workforce which originally sparked the changes. (Steinfatt, 1986, p. 461)

In summary, academic and business leaders are calling for increased oral communication training as part of an undergraduate education. The best way to learn these skills is in the college classroom, and many Communication departments offer courses emphasizing them. Yet the need for oral communication assistance across the curriculum among faculty and students often exceeds institutional resources available to meet such a need. Oral communication activities could be built into the curricular design of a number of different courses and majors to enhance learning of non-speech content, yet faculty in these areas often are not trained in oral communication. Faculty stand to benefit enormously from assistance in incorporating oral communication activities across the curriculum. Students need assistance with a variety of communication skills utilized in the classroom, in jobs and in extracurricular activities. The Oral Communication Program described below offers a cost-effective solution to these problems.

The Nature of the Oral Communication Program (OCP)

The success of two analogous projects served as a springboard for the OCP: the Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum. The Writing Center serves university students needing assistance with writing skills. These services are intended to supplement, but not to replace, the training students receive in English courses. Similarly, the Oral Communication Program serves students seeking help with any of a variety of oral communication concerns. It is designed as an adjunct to, not a replacement for, departmental communication skills courses.

At Radford and hundreds of other institutions, Writing Across the Curriculum has helped faculty in many different disciplines incorporate writing as a teaching and learning tool into their courses.[4] Similarly, the Oral Communication Program assists faculty in incorporating oral communication activities as an integral part of courses throughout the university. Debates, oral reports, listening, and group discussion represent some of the oral communication formats which can enhance the learning of any academic subject. In addition, increased utilization of these formats under the supervision of trained evaluators can improve students' overall effectiveness in oral communication.

In summary, the oral communication program serves two major goals:

1. to provide programming, facilities and professional expertise to help faculty, staff and students improve oral communication skills;

2. to promote and facilitate the incorporation of oral communication as a teaching and learning tool throughout the undergraduate curriculum.

Intended Outcomes for the OCP, 1988-1990

Funding agencies require clear statements of measurable outcomes and detailed descriptions of activities to implement intended outcomes. These areas comprise the major justifications for funding requests for developing an OCP.

1. To develop and implement oral communication activities across the curriculum.

A. Inform all faculty and staff of the services available through the Oral Communication Program in developing and implementing specified oral communication activities in the classroom.

B. Have top university administrators encourage all faculty to incorporate oral communication activities in their curricular design.

C. Conduct a series of university-wide meetings to present techniques and methods of incorporating oral communication activities into curricular design.

D. Conduct two weekend retreats (20 participants per retreat) to provide intensive training in oral communication across the curriculum for selected faculty.

E. Provide a newsletter including both ongoing developments in oral communication across the curriculum and a forum for faculty to exchange information about the program.

F. Enable communication faculty to serve as consultants to instructors from other departments who are teaching communication-intensive courses.

2. To assist faculty and staff throughout the university seeking training to improve their own professional communication skills.

A. Inform all faculty and staff of self-help training available through the OCP.

B. Provide personalized training to all faculty seeking to improve their classroom communication skills.

C. Provide personalized training to all staff seeking to improve their professional communication skills.

3. To improve undergraduate instruction by providing university students with assistance in the development of oral communication skills.

A. Inform all students of the services available through the OCP both for individual self-help and for specified oral communication activities in the classroom.

B. Provide assistance to students seeking help with oral communication activities in coursework across the curriculum.

C. Provide assistance to students seeking help with extracurricular, vocational and personal communication concerns.

4. To develop self-paced instructional materials (handouts, audio, video and computer-assisted training modules) that can deliver services in a cost-effective manner.

Activities

Major activities to implement intended outcomes for the OCP are identified in each of four areas: oral class presentations, speech fright, listening, and group discussion. One of these four areas, oral class presentations, is detailed in the text (see Appendix A for descriptions of the three additional areas). Each of the four areas incorporates increasingly cost-efficient methods over a five year time period. The development of five year plans provides a way to look beyond existing support to seek permanent program status.

The type of assistance needed by students and faculty requires substantial, labor-intensive contribution of expertise and time by OCP personnel. For example, during the Fall of 1987 department faculty and staff assisted an instructor in Management by training students in effective oral class presentations. One group of four outstanding students received ten hours of training in oral presentation skills and an additional five hours of videotaped practice and review. Original plans for this project called for seven different groups of four students each to receive the same intensive instruction. The amount of time and effort involved made it necessary to limit activities to the one group of four students. Thus, any attempt to offer service even to one entire class represents an enormous contribution of time and effort by department faculty and staff. Providing similar programs for a variety of classes in a variety of departments quickly becomes prohibitive without the development of more efficient methods of serving the university's needs.

Some methods of increasing efficiency are identified in each of the four areas detailed below. Plans for the first full year of operation by necessity call for labor-intensive assistance requiring considerable time and effort, thus limiting service capacity. A key to serving more people is developing and discovering software and programming to provide more self-paced instruction, thus enabling service to a much larger segment of the university community without major increases in program personnel. For example, in the project discussed above, audio-visual materials on public address plus self-paced computer programs could enable students to teach themselves with less direct input needed from OCP faculty and staff.

This need for timely development of programming requires larger initial expenditures for professional time spent identifying or creating the programming. The OCP developed a library of videotaped instructional packages prepared by university faculty and commercially-available video-training packages. Faculty conducted literature reviews, contacted communication associations and other institutions to identify and obtain information on possible programming ideas, assessment instruments, training modules, etc., already available. Outside consultants were utilized to assist faculty in developing computer-aided instruction and to evaluate outcomes of such programming. Specific programmatic activities include: pre- and post-tests of communication skills, procedural guidelines, printed information, audio and visual training materials and computerized self-paced instructional materials. Once such programming and materials

were identified, the OCP installed them, tracked their initial use, identified problem areas and portions needing revision, performed necessary revisions, and conducted evaluations to further increase efficiency. Continuing emphasis on cost-efficiency will enable the OCP to put in place activities which promise to effect permanent changes in the curriculum at Radford University.

The following five-year plan illustrates some of the activities designed to implement intended outcomes while achieving increased cost-efficiency.

Oral Class presentations

The program provides faculty and students information about topic selection, audience analysis, research, outlining, style and delivery of public speeches.

Year 1 Oral Class Presentations.

a. Provide coaching in:

Delivery (both oral and non-verbal)

Effective organization of the presentation (introduction, body, conclusion, etc.)

Audience analysis and adaptation

Effective development and support of the presentation (style, support material, reasoning, etc.)

Methods of reducing speech fright

Generating and adapting to immediate audience responses

Using outlines and speaking outlines effectively

Evaluating oral class presentations

b. Help students (given permission and guidelines from their instructor) plan oral presentations for the classroom.

c. Help faculty develop oral presentation techniques to be used in the classroom.

Program personnel utilize a number of training techniques to assist with the topics listed above. These labor-intensive techniques include:

a. Analysis of face-to-face presentations and feedback by staff

b. Analysis by staff of audio and videotapes of planned oral performances.

c. Extensive use of handout materials, lecture/discussion and suggested readings.

d. Provision for videotaping practice performances by clients and self analysis (by clients) of the videotapes.

Years 2-3 Oral Class Presentations. The OCP will continue the services described above and improve efficiency by the following activities:

a. Develop videotaped presentations on key areas of oral presentations that may be accessed by computer (i.e., clients could call up a videotape showing how to outline a speech and how to prepare and use a speaking outline).

b. Expand technical equipment to enable expanded videotaping of actual student oral presentations outside OCP facilities (on or off campus). This will enable additional feedback on actual performance in addition to practice performance.

Years 4-5 Oral Class Presentations. The OCP will continue services described above and improve efficiency by the following activities:

a. Develop a videotape library of a variety of types of oral presentations in a variety of departments. These could be programmed to enable computer access so students can see examples of class presentations similar to their project.

b. Institute research to determine if interactive video and other self-paced training in oral communication skills is related to: 1) improved academic performance (using G.P.A. and other outcome measures) and
2) non-cognitive behaviors and attitudes (using measures of self-concept, locus of control, vocational maturity, etc.). Evaluation of this type will be coordinated through the Student Assessment Office.

c. Develop faculty in various departments who are willing and able to help coach students who wish to make oral presentations in their particular discipline.

d. Continue and expand development of item "a" from years 2-3.

This concludes the description of the specific activities to achieve the intended outcomes for the Oral Communication Program. In the next section key indicators of Radford University's commitment to the OCP are discussed.

Institutional Commitment to the Project

Demonstrated institutional commitment to the project provides one major criterion by which funding agencies evaluate grant proposals. Even more important, such commitment is necessary to the successful initiation and continuation of an interdisciplinary program of this magnitude. The institution may demonstrate such commitment by a numbers of means involving both public declarations of support and allocation of tangible resources. Evidence of institutional support might include:

public endorsements by top administrators, chairs, the general faculty, and support personnel in specialized areas such as counseling and career planning and placement.

provision of space on campus for an oral communication program.

provision of reassigned time for faculty to help develop and run the program.

provision of supplies and equipment.

provision of support staff (technicians, secretaries, student workers).

active participation by faculty and students in pilot programs.

endorsement by student organizations of the concept and activities of the oral communication program.

departmental support of the program demonstrated through willingness to volunteer services at least in the initial stages.

Such visible commitment helps make a persuasive case to possible grantors, helps generate and spread enthusiasm for the

project, and helps ensure that, whatever the external funding, the project will continue in some form.

Assessment

Assessment has become an important factor for both program development and grant applications as political, business and education leaders call for educational institutions to provide evidence of instructional effectiveness. Careful assessment of outcomes for oral communication across the curriculum activities seems especially important. Cronin and Glenn (1990) summarize initial assessment efforts at oral communication programs across the country and, noting the preliminary nature of what data is available, call for more empirical and longitudinal measures of results. Particular assessment activities must be designed to fit the needs of both funding agencies and the institution itself. The Oral Communication Program's goals and activities have been linked closely with institutional efforts to assess student learning. The Radford University assessment plan includes 4 goals for undergraduate education:

1. To enhance the basic entry level skills of those students who may be deficient in the areas of reading comprehension, written or oral communication, and/or mathematical skills;
2. To enhance the academic skills of all students to communicate effectively, think critically and draw inferences across the curriculum;

3. To enhance the intellectual development of students in one or more areas of specialization (the major); and
4. To enhance the occupational, civic and cultural competencies of students.

The OCP provides services directly contributing to the accomplishment of these goals. Incoming students can have their communication skill levels evaluated. OCP-sponsored activities should help enhance student academic skills. Long-term studies are needed to assess results on this issue. The OCP staff works closely with Radford University's Director of Student Assessment to assess student communication skill levels and to evaluate the impact of Oral Communication Program activities on enhancing classroom learning across the curriculum.

Commonly accepted public policy program assessment standards are applied to evaluate intended outcomes of the program .

1. Curricular development. To measure success in achieving this goal, faculty who utilize services of the OCP provide written evaluation. Other measures include quantifying the number of faculty who make use of services, who attend informational or training meetings, and who incorporate suggested oral communication learning activities into their curricula. Consultants help evaluate the impact of the OCP on the curriculum.

2. Faculty development. Evaluation from faculty utilizing the OCP or receiving OCP information is obtained. The number of faculty who

use the OCP for self-help to enhance their oral communication skills is also recorded.

3. Student development. To measure success in achieving this goal, evaluation from students who utilize OCP services is obtained. Other measures include quantifying the number of students utilizing OCP services and administering pre- and post-tests to evaluate clients' improvement in specific communication skills and changes in student attitudes toward oral communication. Consultants help evaluate improvement in students' communication competence.

4. Development of self-paced instructional materials. The educational value and use of these materials is assessed by quantifying the number of clients using them, conducting evaluations of clients' reactions to the materials, evaluating clients' improvement after using self-paced programming, and utilizing outside consultants to evaluate the quality and educational utility of such materials.

Facilities

Radford University provided space to house the facilities of the OCP. A campus building was renovated to include a seminar room with permanently-mounted video and audio recording equipment; two practice rooms with one-way mirrors for observation, rehearsal or taping by individuals or small groups; two viewing stations with video players and monitors; and two interactive work stations with desktop computers and video players. Additional equipment includes portable

camcorders, audio cassette decks, and laptop computers (see Appendix B for corresponding budget items).

Dissemination of Program Results

Radford already has a highly successful and well-supported Writing Across the Curriculum program. With the implementation of an oral communication across the curriculum program, Radford is in the forefront of universities utilizing these cross-disciplinary approaches to undergraduate instruction and curricular development. This program offers a model for other institutions to use in developing curricula reflecting increased oral communication emphasis throughout the university.

Communication faculty, faculty from other departments and students involved in the program have presented programs at state and national conventions, authored articles and provided consulting on the integration of oral communication activities into curricula throughout the university. Programming, activities and policies developed here will be made available to other universities to assist them in developing similar ideas. Thus, the benefits of the program will be made available to institutions throughout the nation.

Personnel

An Oral Communication Program designed to serve needs of this scope requires considerable time and resources for planning, implementation and maintenance. A three-quarter time director is responsible for

administration of the program. One-half reassigned time support provides for two faculty members per year for two years to participate as Project Coordinators in all phases of developing and implementing the OCP. The Project Coordinators have substantial planning and evaluation responsibilities during summers. One-quarter reassigned time for six faculty members per year for two years is devoted to discovery and development of instructional programming. Professional consultants are brought in to assist with faculty training, program development and evaluation.

In order to serve the needs of the university community, a center was established which is open to students, faculty and staff for a minimum of four hours each weekday that school is in session. Staffing for this center necessitates a 1/2 time secretary and at least one faculty member present during operating hours (see Appendix B for corresponding budget items).

Conclusion

In this paper we have tried to provide descriptions of key activities in one oral communication across the curriculum program, the largest of its kind in the nation. In addition, we have provided elements which those seeking grant monies for such a program may find particularly useful. Developing grant proposals and implementing OCP programs require strong support at all levels--department, college, institution's grants office, institution, and funding agency. Continuous consultation

with key personnel at each level will foster involvement and support from all levels and will increase the likelihood of a successful program.

Oral communication across the curriculum represents an innovative approach to communication skills training and offers enormous potential benefits. We hope that the information in this paper will prove of interest to those already involved in such a program, those considering initiating one, or those simply wishing to learn more about it. The success of writing across the curriculum and the initial, positive results of pioneering oral communication programs in the United States suggest that this approach merits serious consideration.

Appendix A

Additional Areas of OCP Emphasis

Speech Fright Program

A major problem facing public speakers is anxiety about speaking. Fortunately, there are a number of specific techniques available for self-instruction and professional assistance to manage this problem.

Year 1 Speech Fright

a. Diagnosis of major behavioral indicators of speech fright by staff based on a sample speech, a videotape, a class or some other public performance.
b. Handout (to those who need motivation) on the effects of speech fright.
c. Diagnosis by staff of the major causal forces for an individual's speech fright.
d. Treatment by staff to improve public speaking skills (when this is a major part of the speech fright).
e. Treatment by staff to reduce anxiety unrelated to skills deficiencies.
f. Videotape and playback of initial speech showing higher fright and subsequent speeches showing reduction in fright-indicative behaviors.

Years 2-3 Speech Fright. Services described above will be continued and efficiency improved by the following activities:

a. Groups of attendees with similar speech fright problems will be run as "therapy" groups.

b. Computer/videotape approaches will be developed to provide training in dealing with each of the seven major situational causes of high communication anxiety. This will reduce the labor-intensive demands on the OCP staff by letting the client call up lecture and video materials relevant to his/her specific situational causes.

c. Videotape library of progress of successful clients to convince current clients that most individuals with speech fright can make significant improvement.

d. Selected treatment methods will be presented by experts on videotape training modules. These may be viewed when appropriate by clients, thus providing reduction of one-on-one training demands on staff.

Years 4-5 Speech Fright. Services described above will be continued and efficiency improved by the following activities:

a. Continue development of effective video and computer software for items "b," "c" and "d" from the description of years 2-3 above. This will provide further reduction of labor intensive demands on staff to provide as much one-on-one service to clients.

b. Develop a comprehensive computer program to enable clients to work through the symptoms, causes, effects and treatment of speech fright on their own or with significantly reduced one-on-one consultation. Treatments will be programmed to deal with specific causes and symptoms. The computer program will be keyed to appropriate videotapes illustrating the materials relevant to the specific needs of the individual client.

c. Undertake research studies on the effect of various treatment methods in dealing with speech fright (i.e., cross cultural research).

Listening

The OCP program in listening training involves:

Year 1 Listening

a. Obtain and administer tests of effective listening.

b. Provide handouts and suggested readings on such areas as: bad habits of listeners, types of non-listeners, suggestions for improving listening, effects of poor listening, etc.

c. Provide help in diagnosing the major causes for the client's listening problems.

d. Train clients in treatment methods designed to alleviate their specific listening problems i.e., effective note taking, accurate empathy, paraphrasing, parasupporting,

anticipating major points, mentally recapitulating major points, identifying support material, etc.

e. Videotape clients' listening behavior to identify nonverbal barriers that may be impeding effective listening.

f. Help faculty develop student listening techniques to enhance classroom learning.

Years 2-3 Listening. Services described above will be continued and efficiency improved by the following activities:

a. Develop an audio-visual library of films, videotapes, etc., dealing with listening in a variety of situations.

b. Computerize the testing and some of the diagnosis of listening problems. Clients will be able to evaluate themselves on programmed materials for listening assessment.

c. Develop computerized scoring (with a printout for each client) of assessment of a client's listening behavior by 3 or more co-workers or friends. Computer scoring will compare and contrast self-scoring by the client with ratings by others of the client's listening behavior.

Years 4-5 Listening. Services described above will be continued and efficiency improved by the following activities:

a. Continue and expand development of interactive video instruction on listening.

b. Videotape actual listening behavior by clients coupled with a periodic "freeze frame" of what they are thinking about at the moment of stop action. This will be entered into the

computer and correlated (by time) with the videotape to help diagnose listening problems.

Small Group Communication

This program offers students training and education in principles and practices of communication in small groups.

Year 1 Small Group Communication

a. Videotape practice group discussions and analyze group and individual behavior.

b. Provide handouts and suggested readings on key small group communication skills.

c. Help students (with instructor's permission) plan small group presentations for the classroom.

d. Help faculty develop small group techniques to be used in the classroom.

e. Videotape actual group activities (i.e., fraternity meetings, student government meetings, etc.) and analyze group and individual behavior.

f. Train groups or individuals in selected small group communication techniques, i.e., leadership functions, agenda making, conflict resolution, followership, listening, decision making, etc.

Years 2-3 Small Group. Services described above will be continued and efficiency improved by the following activities:

a. Develop a videotape-computer program to identify key discussion problems and suggest methods for reducing those problems.

b. Develop a videotape library of various discussion techniques that may be used in the classroom.

c. Develop a videotape library of training on techniques listed under item "f" from year 1. This will greatly reduce the labor intensive nature of OCP training in these areas.

Years 4-5 Small Group. Services described above will be continued and efficiency improved by the following activities:

a. Continue with item "a" from years 2-3 and develop materials into a programmed training tool for clients to try to identify the problems themselves and suggest possible solutions before assessment by the expert.

Appendix B

Budget Items[5]

1988-1990

Personnel services:

Director of Student Assessment (5% of total salary). To provide direction in assessment and evaluation for the OCP.

Secretary. One-half time.

Project director. A three-quarter-time position funded by the university.

Project coordinators. Two faculty members on one-half reassigned time to work with the project director in developing, implementing, and evaluating OCP activities.

Faculty assistance. Six faculty members on one-quarter reassigned time to aid in developing programming.

Project coordinators. Summer stipends for two faculty members to work with the project director in developing, implementing, and evaluating OCP activities.

Nonpersonnel services.

Postage. For information dissemination, including a semi-annual OCP newsletter.

Printing. For information dissemination including handouts and pamphlets for clients and preparation of semi-annual OCP newsletter.

Telephone. For OCP information gathering and dissemination.

Skilled services for renovation. Adaptation of space (provided by Radford University) to technical needs in order to facilitate more cost-effective delivery of services.

Consultants. To assist with development of oral communication programming, installation of software, and evaluation of activities.

Software. For standard software packages such as word processing to accompany computers.

Travel. For dissemination of OCP information in professional academic conventions. For costs related to two weekend-long retreats, each providing training in oral communication across the curriculum for 20 university faculty members. For consultants assisting with programming, software, and evaluation.

Indirect costs. Funded by the university; calculated at 40% of salaries, wages, and fringe benefits.

Administrative supplies. For implementation of all OCP activities. Includes stationary, office supplies, etc.

Specific use supplies. For purchase of supplies such as commercially-prepared, self-paced computer training programs in facets of oral communication.

Computer equipment. For purchase of laptop and personal computers to be used by clients in instruction and analysis, by OCP staff for administration, and by faculty developing instructional materials (one-half of costs funded by Radford University).

Books and videos and other related. To accompany various training activities of the OCP, including both pre-recorded and blank audio and videotapes.

Electronic equipment. For purchase of audio consoles, video consoles, video cameras, units and monitors, tape recorders, projectors, etc.

Desks, tables, chairs. For use by OCP clients and staff.

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Notes

[1]See Weiss (1988) for description of some of these programs.

[2]The authors secured $412,000 in combined university support and grant money (Funds for Excellence from the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia) for 1988-1990, enabling Radford University to establish the largest oral communication program in the nation. For a report on the first year of operation of the Oral Communication Program, including detailed assessment of results, see Cronin and Glenn (1990).

[3]Except for the omission of a problem statement, the qualifications of project directors, and the actual budget, the organizational pattern of this article represents a standard grant proposal format.

[4]The authors recommend using the analogy with writing across the curriculum in grant proposals since most funding agencies are more familiar with this concept than with oral communication across the curriculum. Furthermore, many institutions may choose to combine these programs under a broader concept such as language or communication across the curriculum.

[5]A copy of the 1988-1990 budget may be obtained by writing the first author, Department of Communication, Box 5784, Radford University, Radford, VA, 24142.